

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1022

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 6522

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, PE

SUBJECT: ARMY CHANGES AND CIVILIAN DISQUIET

REF: LIMA 6444

SUMMARY: MORE ARMY CHANGES HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED. THE CIMP WILL DIS-
APPEAR IN A REORGANIZATION PLAN. ARMY DISCONTENT MAY HAVE FORCED
PRIME MINISTER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO TO WITHDRAW A COMMANDER OF
HIS CHOICE. STRIKING WORKERS WILL BE FIRED AND LABMIN IS CON-
FIDENT GOP CAN HANDLE ANY LABOR UNREST. PUBLIC ORDER IS BEING MAIN-
TAINED BUT 7:00 P.M. CURFEW HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO AREQUIPA. ARMY
OFFICERS EXPRESS DISTRUST OVER POLICE WHILE MILITARY INSTITU-
TIONS THEMSELVES REMAIN UNSETTLED.

1. JULY 15 EDITIONS OF GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED PRESS CORRECTED
RECORD OF JULY 14 AND PRINTED MINISTRY OF WAR ANNOUNCEMENT THAT
GENERAL VICTOR LOPEZ MENDOZA, WHO WAS NAMED TO COMMAND THE
ARMY ACADEMIC CENTERS, WILL BE REPLACED AS THE FIRST REGION
COMMANDER (PIURA) BY GENERAL AUGUSTO RIOS GAMARRA, FORMERLY
HEAD OF ARMY INTELLIGENCE. THE NEW CHIEF OF ARMY INTELLIGENCE
IS GENERAL RAFAEL BENZAQUEN OYARCE. GENERAL JOSE GUABLOCHE
RODRIGUEZ, REPORTED BY THE PRESS TO BE THE NEW FIRST REGION
COMMANDER, HAS IN FACT BEEN NAMED COMMANDER GENERAL OF THE
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EIGHTH INFANTRY DIVISION. FINALLY, GENERAL RICHTER

PRADA, WHOM THE GOP HAD ORIGINALLY ANNOUNCED AS THE NEW HEAD OF CIMP, REMAINS INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE ARMY. POLITICAL SOURCES TELL EMBASSY THAT THE ARMY REFUSED TO ACCEPT RICHTER AS HEAD OF CIMP BECAUSE HE HAD BECOME IDENTIFIED WITH PRIME MINISTER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO. FERNANDEZ MALDONADO HAD DESIGNATED RICHTER BUT PURPORTEDLY WAS FORCED TO BACK DOWN AND SEARCH FOR ANOTHER CANDIDATE ACCEPTABLE TO THE ARMY. IF THIS VERSION IS CORRECT, FERNANDEZ MALDONADO'S CONTROL OVER THE ARMY IS SHOWN TO BE LESS THAN COMPLETE.

2. JULY 15 PRESS ALSO CONFIRMED ABSORPTION OF CIMP INTO THE NEWLY CREATED SYSTEM OF ARMY ACADEMIC CENTERS. FONMIN DE LA FLOR TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT CIMP WILL IN FACT BE TOTALLY REORGANIZED AND THE NAME CHANGED. ACCORDING TO DE LA FLOR THE REORGANIZATION OF ARMY SCHOOLS WAS ALREADY IN PROCESS AND THE BOBBIO INCIDENT MERELY ADVANCED THE DAY OF IMPLEMENTATION. THAT EXPLANATION IS PLAUSIBLE BUT DOUBTFUL. WE FEEL THAT THE REORGANIZATION IS DUE TO THE STARTLING INDEPENDENCE OF THE ARMY CHAIN OF COMMAND DEMONSTRATED BY THE CIMP.

3. EVIDENT DISCONTENT WITHIN THE MILITARY MAY CONTRIBUTE TO A STILL UNSETTLED POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCENE. FOLLOWING UP MILITARY JOINT COMMAND PROHIBITION OF STRIKES, THE LABOR MINISTRY ANNOUNCED JULY 14 THAT WORKERS ENGAGED IN WORK STOPPAGES OF ANY KIND AUTOMATICALLY LOSE THEIR RIGHT TO JOB SECURITY. IN SPITE OF GOP DECLARATION, TEACHERS, MINERS, AND OTHER FAR-LEFT GROUPS STILL THREATEN TO WALK OUT. LABMIN GALINDO TOLD THE AMBASSADOR JULY 15 THAT HE IS CONVINCED STRIKES WILL NOT PROSPER. THE GOP, SAID GALINDO, IS PREPARED TO HANDLE THE SITUATION. HE DID NOT ELABORATE ON THE MEANS TO BE USED. ALTHOUGH WAXING CONFIDENT, GALINDO ADMITTED THE COMPLEXITY OF THE LABOR SITUATION WHEN HE TOLD THE AMBASSADOR HOW THE CHURCH, THROUGH DIRECT INTERCESSION OF CARDINAL LANDAZURI, "FORCED" GALINDO TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO THE UNION AT THE MANUFACTURAS NYLON PLANT, A RECENT SCENE OF VIOLENCE.

4. A 10:00 P.M. CURFEW CONTINUES IN EFFECT IN LIMA AND CALLAO. CAJAMARCA DISORDERS, WHICH INCLUDED BOMBING OF SINAMOS OFFICE THERE, HAVE ENDED AND CURFEW NOW MOVED BACK TO 10 P.M.
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AREQUIPA IS NOW UNDER 7:00 P.M. CURFEW. ALTHOUGH PUBLIC ORDER HAS BEEN MAINTAINED UNDER THE STATE OF EMERGENCY, FONMIN DE LA FLOR ADMITTED TO A GROUP OF ASSEMBLED AMBASSADORS (INCLUDING AMBASSADOR DEAN) THAT THE MILITARY PARADE SCHEDULED FOR JULY 28 HAD BEEN CANCELLED IN ORDER TO PREVENT "SURPRISES" WHICH MIGHT OCCUR ALONG THE PARADE ROUTE.

5. INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY FORCES ARE NO DOUBT PURSUING

THOSE CONSIDERED A POLITICAL OR SECURITY THREAT. ALFONSO
BAELLA TUESTA, CONSERVATIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WEEKLY POLITICAL
JOURNAL "EL TIEMPO", HAS BEEN IN HIDING FOR THE LAST TWO WEEKS.
WE HAVE INFORMATION NOW THAT AS OF JULY 14 HE WAS SEEKING ASYLUM IN
THE VENEZUELAN EMBASSY. THE LAST HEADLINE OF "EL TIEMPO" PRIOR TO
THE SEIZURE OF ITS OFFICES BY THE GOP IMploRED THE GOP MINISTERS
TO DO PERU A FAVOR AND GO HOME.

6. IN ADDITION TO SOME ARMY DISCONTENT CAUSED BY THE REMOVAL
OF GENERAL BOBBIO, AND NAVY FRUSTRATION OVER RECENT EVENTS,
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ARMY AND THE POLICE ARE NOT FULLY
HARMONIOUS. ARMY OFFICERS AT THE PERUVIAN WAR COLLEGE (CAEM)
OPENLY DISCUSSED THEIR DOUBTS ABOUT POLICE "RELIABILITY"
WITH VISITING U.S. PROFESSORS. THE CAEM OFFICERS FELT THAT
FOR SECURITY REASONS THE POLICE SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN SOPHISTICATED
EQUIPMENT. THESE ATTITUDES REFLECT THE LONG-STANDING PREJUDICE
AND PROBABLY SUSPICION THAT THE POLICE ARE TOO CLOSE TO THE
CIVILIANS AND ARE LIKELY TO BE APRISTAS. THEY ALSO STEM
FROM THE POLICE STRIKE AND ARMY/POLICE CLASH OF FEBRUARY 5,
1975. THEY ELUCIDATE THE CONTINUING MILGOV DISTRUST OF ANYONE
OUTSIDE THEIR OWN RANKS -- EVEN THE POLICE"" AND GOP INABILITY
TO EXPAND ITS BASE OF SUPPORT.
DEAN

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